

delicate by crappyfriday

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Summary:

The situation is delicate—living in Hawkins is delicate. His friendship with Steve Harrington is delicate. But Billy just wants to kiss him and hold his hand.

delicate

Billy has a lot of regrets. At night—when he's all alone, with nothing but his own thoughts and memories crowding his mind—, Billy will catalogue everything. It's like his mind is exclusively a rolodex of unfortunate events that percolate under his skin, making him act completely different than how he wants to.

He remembers when he was six and broke his mother's favourite lamp. He didn't mean to—he was just trying to practice his swings for T-ball, but the end of his bat caught the lampshade and it tumbled to the ground and shattered. His mother was understandably upset (it was passed down from her late mother), but his father had been so angry. He called Billy selfish and childish and stupid.

He remembers it being the first time he was genuinely frightened of his father and the first time he was aware of his father's abilities over him. From there, Billy tried—he really did—to be his best and do his best, but he was (and still is) a child and he gets scared all the same.

His father scares him.

Billy can walk late at night alone; he can start fights with men twice his size, but he will always be scared of his father.

When he was eleven and Harvey Milk was campaigning to be one of the city supervisors, Billy hung up one of his campaign posters in his room. He was excited. Harvey was going to win. And he was going to win while being openly gay. The first openly gay political figure in California *ever*. Billy looked up to Harvey—he represented such a crucial part of Billy.

But his father hated Harvey Milk and he tore down the poster and slapped Billy across the face. He said he knew Billy was just like Harvey—he called him a 'fag'.

He regrets not trying to lie to his dad; he regrets staying silent. Billy tried to toughen up. His dad called feminine men horrible names.

Billy didn't want to give his dad any more reasons to call him that word again. But no matter how he tried, no matter how many sports he played or how often he lifted weights, his dad still knew who he was.

When Susan and Max came into the picture, he felt all alone. It was weird living in a house full of people but always feeling isolated. He felt like a dying limb they were waiting to amputate. His dad loved Max and he resented Billy. He showed her the kind of love he hadn't shown to Billy since he figured out Billy was gay.

Billy never even told him, his dad just assumed. But his dad knew, and it made him cruel.

Billy knows he can be just as cruel. He knows he can be just as evil. That the monster that bred him is the monster he's becoming. In biology, his teacher is lecturing about nature vs. nurture. And Billy wonders how much of who he is is in his blood and how much of who he is is a product of his environment.

When he beat Harrington's face, it felt like he was watching from afar. That his fists weren't his fists. The blood he felt on his knuckles wasn't Harrington's. But when he woke up, he was cold, his body hurt, and his knuckles were bloody. And when school reconvened after the holidays, there were whispers of yellow bruises on Harrington's face.

He had his reasons, but that's not enough. His dad had just beat on him and there was so much anger saturating under his skin. Billy felt like he could see his skin bubbling as he drove to the Byers's house. Billy just wanted to get Max—he just wanted to do something that wouldn't aggravate his father—and he didn't like being lied to.

And most of all, Steve Harrington represented something so integral to Billy, something that he couldn't shove down and ignore. The first time Billy had feelings about another boy he was nine. Oliver was in his class and he had brown, curly hair and blue eyes. Billy was infatuated with him.

Steve Harrington scared Billy. That was the bottom line. He wasn't bigger than Billy, nor was he stronger, but he scared him. The first

time Billy saw him, he was enamoured. In Billy's head, Steve Harrington is two distinct people. There's Steve: the boy Billy saw from across the parking lot on the first day of school—who only in the dark recesses of his mind, did he admit to wanting to kiss. And then there's Harrington: the boy who he mercilessly punched because he was scared of his dad.

It's hard to reconcile the two.

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In a weird, twisted turn of events, Billy and Steve become friends. It happened gradually over a few months. Billy, truthfully, did not want to become Steve Harrington's friend. He didn't think he could handle just being Steve's friend. But the two of them smoke weed and listen to music down at the quarry. Steve has trouble sleeping and Billy just hates being home. They find weird comfort in each other at 2am.

Being in close quarters with Steve is hard, but for small fragments of time, Billy is able to pretend. He pretends they're not in Hawkins; he pretends it's thirty degree weather; he pretends he knows what it's like to feel Steve's hand in his; Steve's lips on his. It's nice. It's nice that for a moment, Billy can delude himself into thinking that the hell he resides in, is not real. That these fairytales and dreams that he conjures late at night, when the house is blanketed by silence, are real.

When Steve's fingers brush his while reaching for the joint, he holds onto that warmth. The kind of warmth he feels from boys. What he feels when Steve's fingers touch his is infinitely more intimate and more meaningful to him than any girl he's ever slept with.

But he's haunted by memories of those same fingers pounding onto his face. And in turn, he's reminded of his own tendencies toward violence. Billy doesn't think he'll ever forget that night. Despite being induced into a drug stupor, everything preceding Max jabbing a needle into his neck, is crystal clear.

He wants to forget it. But when Steve sometimes flinches when Billy's voice is too loud, it's impossible to forget the way the soft skin of his face felt under the hardness of his knuckles

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Billy's on the edge of the quarry by himself. Discarded beer cans surround him while he sits on the hood of his car. He has Queen playing on the stereo—"Somebody to Love" is all too fitting for his mood.

The sun is setting, casting a golden hue through the trees, lighting up Billy's skin. Golden hour is his favourite time of the day. There's a calm that comes with golden hour. Everything is softer. Golden hour turns Steve's dark, brown eyes into a golden amber.

Billy crushes another can of beer—finds difficulty staying upright. At this rate, he'll have to stay here a couple more hours so he can drive home without dying.

"Billy?"

He snaps his head to face the voice. Steve Harrington is a few feet away, staring at Billy.

Billy tries to speak, but his voice comes out all garbled. He clears his throat. "Hey Steve."

"What are you doing out here by yourself?" he asks.

Billy looks at the bridge of Steve's nose, doesn't want to see the effects of golden hour on his eyes. "I'm not sure."

To escape, he wants to say. Hawkins is stifling. His house is stifling. How much he wants to hold Steve's hands is stifling. Something about the quarry lifts a heavy weight off of Billy's shoulders. It's not the same as the ocean, but it's probably the closest he'll find in Indiana.

"Did you want me to leave?"

Billy doesn't reply, just budes over so there's room for Steve on the hood of the camaro. Steve plops down, his thigh pressed against Billy's. It lights up Billy's entire body.

"Are you okay? You seem off," Steve says. He looks concerned.

Billy, not wanting to lie, just shakes his head. Hawkins is dry, but Billy feels like he's drowning constantly.

"What's going on?" Steve's voice is filled with worry. "Do you want to talk about it?"

"I want—" Billy stops. He looks Steve in the eyes, sees the warmth of them. He shifts his eyes to Steve's hands folded in his own lap. "I want—"

Steve shifts his body so he's turned toward Billy. "What do you want Billy?"

"I want to hold your hand."

Steve smiles, softly. "Then hold it."

He sticks his hand out for Billy to grab. After a moment, Billy intertwines his fingers with Steve's. Billy feels the tension he's held in his body ever since he moved to Hawkins dissolve.

Steve squeezes his hand. "Just say what you want. Maybe I want it too."

"I want to kiss you."

"Then kiss me."

Author's Note:

what the fuck up i love taylor swift('s delicate)

here's something short n sweet <3

come talk to me on tumblr @softloucre send me prompts!!

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